



Statement of Senator Feinstein on Bill to
Fund Rural Schools and Transportation Projects

February 4, 2005

“I am pleased to join Senators Larry Craig and Ron Wyden as a cosponsor of legislation to re-authorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

Prior to the passage of this legislation in 2000, rural counties faced unpredictable payments from the revenue generated on National Forest land. The sharp decline in funding during the 1990s left counties scraping to meet the needs of their communities.

Since the Act became law, rural counties have been able to make regular investments in schools, transportation projects, forest management projects, search and rescue services, fire prevention planning, and other important services. Last year, rural California counties received \$67 million through the Act, \$41 million above what they received in the final year under the previous funding approach. The counties receiving the highest amounts of funding in 2004 were:

- Siskiyou, \$9.3 million,**
- Trinity, \$7.7 million,**
- Plumas, \$7.3 million,**
- El Dorado, \$4.1 million, and**
- Shasta, \$4 million.**

The Act has also brought together diverse groups of stakeholders across California to study and approve land management projects including wildfire fuels reduction, habitat improvement, watershed restoration, road maintenance and rehabilitation, reforestation, campground and trail improvement, and noxious weed eradication. These Resource Advisory Committees have taken the public land management decision-making process out of the courtroom and into the meeting room.

I will continue to work with Senators Craig and Wyden to ensure that rural counties receive the funds they need to serve their communities.”

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